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of the mud/' grunted the ktter, " and then I can go." The Kaiser shook hands without saying a word. Once again the experienced diplomat confirmed the lofty expectations of his friends. Though his commission only ksted four months, there was time to make history. His first appearance in the Reichstag was such a failure that it would have thrown a younger and less confident performer out of his stride. Billow had borne the brunt of the debates on the *Daily Telegraph* interview, but in attempting to exculpate himself he had reflected on the officials of the Foreign Office. It was Kiderlen's task to defend the working of the department. His bright yellow waistcoat combined with his Swabkn accent to evoke contemptuous merriment. His argument that the officials were overworked was unconvincing and his rather nonchalant attitude irritated his hearers. He took the fiasco calmly, not merely because he was never in awe of Parliament or ruler, but also because he rejected the notion of democratic control of foreign affairs as scornfully as the Kaiser himself.

The chief problems with which the interim Minister had to deal during his four months in the Wilhelmstrasse were Morocco and the Bosnian crisis. The Act of Algeciras was generally regarded as a mere truce in the Morocco struggle, but after the excitement of the Conference there had been a welcome *detente*. In September, 1908, however, the smouldering embers burst into flame when deserters from the Foreign Legion were helped to escape by German officials at Casa-blanca, who in turn were roughly handled by French officials. Nothing so alarming had happened since the Schnaebele frontier incident twenty years earlier, and for a week or two war was in the air. The crisis passed, partly because it was

clear that both sides had erred, partly because the Bosnian crisis made it desirable for Germany to keep her hands free. When the dispute was referred to the Hague Court the danger was over. In both countries there was a desire to avert the recurrence of such nerve-racking alarms and both were eager to trade. The strength of France lay in her position as a land neighbour of Morocco, the strength of Germany in her treaty rights.

In January, 1908, Jules Cambon, the French Ambassador at Berlin, reported that Schoen wished to discuss an economic entente. Exactly a year later, when the Casablanca crisis was over, both sides were ready for a deal. "Kiderien visited me to-day on behalf of Baron Schoen,*' he reported on January